

Message Text

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ACTION EA-09

INFO OCT-01 EUR-12 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-04 H-01
INR-07 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 PRS-01 SP-02
SS-15 USIA-06 DHA-02 CU-02 SCA-01 IO-13 DEAE-00
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R 271015Z JUN 77
FM AMEMBASSY VIENTIANE
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 8254
INFO AMEMBASSY BANGKOK
AMEMBASSY CANBERRA
AMEMBASSY LONDON
AMEMBASSY PARIS
AMCONSUL HONG KONG
CINCPAC

C O N F I D E N T I A L VIENTIANE 0970

CINCPAC FOR POLAD

E.O. 11652: XGDS-4
TAGS: PINS SHUM LA AS UK FR
SUBJECT: LAO ARRESTED MORE FOREIGNERS ALONG WITH JOURNALIST
EVERINGHAM

REF: VIENTIANE 0964

SUMMARY: IN ADDITION TO AUSTRALIAN EVERINGHAM AND
BRITISH TEACHER ORAM AND HIS WIFE IT APPEARS LPDR
SECURITY FORCES HAVE ARRESTED AND ARE DETAINING
ANOTHER BRITISH TEACHER, A FRENCH TEACHER, AND A
FRENCH EX-EMPLOYEE OF UNICEF. THREE OTHER BRITISH
TEACHERS WHOM THE LPDR AUTHORITIES ALSO WENT LOOKING
FOR ARE SITTING IT OUT IN THE BRITISH EMBASSY RESI-
DENCE. THE FRENCH EMBASSY IS REACTING SLOWLY FOR FEAR
THERE MAY BE SOMETHING TO THE DRUG ALLEGATIONS AGAINST
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THOSE DETAINED. BRITISH AND AUSTRALIANS HAVE DEMANDED
CONSULAR ACCESS TO THEIR NATIONALS WITH NO SUCCESS TO
DATE. END SUMMARY.

1. IN ADDITION TO THE BRITISH TEACHER AND HIS THAI
WIFE ARRESTED ALONG WITH "FAR EAST ECONOMIC
REVIEW" CORRESPONDENT JOHN EVERINGHAM, REFTEL, A

SECOND BRITISH TEACHER, JAMES KENNEDY; A FRENCH CHEMISTRY TEACHER, GEORGE BIBOLLET; AND A FORMER UNICEF STAFF MEMBER, FRENCH CITIZEN FRANCOISE CHAUVE, WERE APPARENTLY ALSO ARRESTED AT THE EVERINGHAM RESIDENCE AT APPROXIMATELY THE SAME TIME.

2. THE BRITISH CHARGE D'AFFAIRES TOLD US JUNE 27 THAT HE INTENDS TO SEND AN AIDE MEMOIRE TO THE LAO MFA AFTERNOON JUNE 27 REQUESTING THAT THE LAO EITHER RELEASE THE BRITISH BEING HELD (INCLUDING THE THAI WIFE OR ORAM WHO ENJOYS BRITISH AS WELL AS THAI NATIONALITY) OR THAT THE LAO PRESENT CHARGES AGAINST THE BRITISHERS AND GRANT CONSULAR ACCESS TO THEM BY BRITISH DIPLOMATS. BRITISH CHARGE SAID THAT HE WAS AWAITING INSTRUCTIONS FROM LONDON BEFORE DELIVERING A STRONGER DIPLOMATIC NOTE OF PROTEST. HE ALSO SAID THAT UNLESS THE LAO DID SOMETHING SOON, AND IT DIDN'T LOOK LIKE THEY WERE GOING TO, HE DID NOT SEE ANY FUTURE FOR THE CONTINUATION OF TECHNICAL COOPERATION WITH THEM. THE TWO BRITISH TEACHERS ARE PART OF A FIVE PERSON BRITISH GOVERNMENT FUNDED "VOLUNTARY SERVICE ORGANIZATION" STAFF OF TEACHERS IN LAOS. THE OTHER THREE BRITISH CITIZEN TEACHERS MOVED JUNE 24 FOR THEIR SAFETY TO THE RESIDENCE OF THE BRITISH AMBASSADOR, WHO IS CURRENTLY ON VACATION. ON JUNE 25 THEIR LAO NEIGHBORS REPORTED THAT THE LAO SECURITY POLICE CAME TO

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THE VSO TEACHERS AND TWO BRITISH COUNCIL TEACHERS HAVE DISCONTINUED TEACHING FOR THE TIME BEING.

3. AN AUSTRALIAN DIPLOMAT TOLD US THAT THE AUSTRALIAN AMBASSADOR, MORNING OF JUNE 27, CALLED ON SOMBAT CHOUNLAMANY, DIRECTOR OF THE DEPARTMENT OF WESTERN AND PACIFIC NATIONS OF THE LAO MFA, REGARDING THE EVERINGHAM ARREST. THE DIPLOMAT ADDED THAT THE AUSTRALIAN EMBASSY WOULD SEND A DIPLOMATIC NOTE THAT WOULD 1) COMPLAIN THAT THE EMBASSY WAS NOT IMMEDIATELY INFORMED OF THE ARREST OF AN AUSTRALIAN CITIZEN, 2) REQUEST THE LAO STATE THE CHARGES ON WHICH THE AUSTRALIAN WAS BEING HELD AND 3) REQUEST CONSULAR ACCESS TO EVERINGHAM.

4. A BRITISH DIPLOMAT TOLD US THAT THE FRENCH WERE "NOT INCLINED TO MOVE TOO QUICKLY" TO PROTEST THE ARREST OF THEIR TWO NATIONALS BECAUSE THEY REPORTEDLY THOUGHT THAT THERE MIGHT BE A "DRUG CONNECTION" TO THE ARREST. FRENCH CONSUL REPORTEDLY VISITED LOCAL JAILS IN VIENTIANE IN SEARCH OF MISSING NATIONALS MORNING OF JUNE 27.

5. IT IS NOT KNOWN WHERE THOSE ARRESTED ARE BEING HELD, THOUGH IT IS PRESUMED THEY ARE BEING HELD IN THE VIENTIANE AREA. SEVERAL DIPLOMATS HAVE REPORTED SEEING "WESTERNERS" AT THE FORMER CHURCH OF FATHER MENDER, OPPOSITE JAPANESE EMBASSY RESIDENCE ON THADEUA ROAD. A BRITISH DIPLOMAT SAID, HOWEVER, THAT HE SUSPECTED THAT THOSE ARRESTED MIGHT BE HELD IN DIFFERENT PLACES.
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